

## Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 2479

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PEKING IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDO IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL MADRAS

CINCPAC IMMEDIATE

USIA WASHDC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IN, BD

SUBJECT: ATTEMPT ON LIFE OF INDIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER: PRESS  
REACTION

SUMMARY. ATTEMPT ON LIFE OF THE INDIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER IN  
DACCA IS HEADLINED IN ALL DELHI PAPERS NOVEMBER 27. "THE TIMES  
OF INDIA" IN A VERY STRONG EDITORIAL BLAMES THE GOB FOR THE  
ANTI-INDIAN PROPAGANDA "WHIPPED-UP" SINCE THE DEATH OF MUJIB.  
THE GOB IS ACCUSED OF ENCOURAGING COMMUNAL AND ANTI-INDIAN  
ACTIVISTS. THE "STATESMAN'S EDITORIAL IS MORE MODERATE, WHILE  
THE CPI'S "PATRIOT" DOUBTS THAT THE GOB REALLY WAS CONCERNED  
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WITH THE SAFETY OF INDIAN PERSONNEL IN DACCA. THE ULTIMATE AIM

OF THOSE BEHIND THE EVENTS IN BANGLADESH IS TO PUSH INSTABILITY INTO INDIA, "PATRIOT" CONCLUDES. GOB PRESIDENT SAYEM'S MESSAGE OF REGRET TO THE GOI PRESIDENT IS CARRIED IN FRONT PAGE BOLD TYPE IN THE CONGRESS-R UNOFFICIAL DAILY "NATIONAL HERALD." "PATRIOT" REPORTS THE GOB AS HAVING IDENTIFIED THE ASSAILANTS AS BELONGING TO THE JSD. THE STAFF OF THE INDIAN HIGH COMMISSION IN DACCA FOR THE PRESENT IS NOT BEING RECALLED. A "PATRIOT" ARTICLE ACCUSES THE PRC OF TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE SITUATION IN BANGLADESH. THE CHINESE ARE SAID TO HAVE OBTAINED PORT RIGHTS AT CHITTAGONG AND THIS MAY BE USED TO EXTEND THEIR OPERATIONS INTO THE BAY OF BENGAL, POSING A SECURITY THREAT TO INDIA. THE PRC MAY ALSO BE USING THE HILLY AREAS OF CHITTAGONG "TO CREATE MISCHIEF" IN TRIPURA AND MIZORAM. THE PRESS REPORTS CONFLICTS BETWEEN STUDENTS TOGETHER WITH SECTIONS OF THE ARMY AND THE BD ARMY NOVEMBER 18. SECTIONS OF THE MILITARY REPORTEDLY PRESENTED A "MEMO-RANDUM OF DEMANDS" TO THE MILITARY REGIME CALLING FOR THE REMOVAL OF TOP ARMY OFFICERS ACCUSED OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DEATH OF MANY MILITARY PERSONNEL. END SUMMARY.

1. ATTEMPT ON LIFE OF INDIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER IN DACCA RECEIVES FRONT-PAGE HEADLINES ALL MORNING PAPERS NEW DELHI NOVEMBER 27. THREE OF THE SIX CAPITAL DAILIES EDITORIALIZE. MOST SIGNIFICANT IS PARTICULARLY STRONG LANGUAGE EMPLOYED BY "THE TIMES OF INDIA": "THIS IS NOT JUST THE ACT OF A GANG OF DERANGED MEN OUT FOR CHEAP PUBLICITY. ON THE CONTRARY, IT IS AN EXPRESSION OF THE ANTI-INDIA SENTIMENT THAT HAS BEEN DELIBERATELY WHIPPED UP IN BANGLADESH IN THE WAKE OF SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN'S ASSASSINATION ON AUGUST 15 LAST AND ALLOWED TO ASSUME DANGEROUS PROPORTIONS IN RECENT WEEKS...THOSE AT THE HELM OF AFFAIRS IN DACCA HAVE DONE NOTHING TO CHECK THE NEFARIOUS PROPAGANDA AGAINST THIS COUNTRY IN UTTER DISREGARD OF THE HELP IT RENDERED THEM IN THEIR STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM IN 1971 AND THE RISKS IT RAN IN THE PROCESS. THEY HAVE NOT ONLY INSPIRED FALSE REPORTS IN THE FOREIGN PRESS REGARDING ALLEGED INTERFERENCE IN THEIR AFFAIRS BY NEW DELHI BUT ALSO RELEASED AND ENCOURAGED COMMUNAL, REACTIONARY AND ANTI-INDIAN ACTIVISTS WHO HAD BEEN JAILED BY THE SHEIKH. THE PRESENT BANGLADESH 'RULERS' ARE OBVIOUSLY INSECURE AND FRIGHTENED MEN WHO ARE CLUTCHING AT ANY STRAW LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO KEEP THEMSELVES AFLOAT. BUT THEY CANNOT PRETEND THAT THEY WERE NOT WARNED OF THE POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR ACTION IN LEANING ON THE SUPPORT OF PRECISELY THOSE ELEMENTS WHO HAD COLLABORATED WITH THE PAKISTAN ARMY IN ITS CAMPAIGN OF ARSON, LOOT, RAPE AND MURDER IN 1971. NEW DELHI TOLD THEM MORE THAN A FORTNIGHT AGO THAT THEY WERE PURSUING A DANGEROUS COURSE. SINCE THEY CHOSE TO DISREGARD THAT FRIENDLY WARNING, THEY CANNOT DISOWN THEIR RESPONSIBILITY

IN THE MATTER."

2. THE "STATESMAN'S" EDITORIAL IS MORE MODERATE IN TONE, DEALING WITH THE INSTABILITY THAT HAS PLAGUED THE COUNTRY OVER RECENT YEARS. THE CPI'S DAILY, "PATRIOT," WHICH "COINCIDENTALLY" TITLES ITS EDITORIAL, "DASTARDLY," THE SAME AS THE "TIMES OF INDIA," ASKS WHETHER THE AUTHORITIES IN DACCA WERE REALLY "CONCERNED WITH PROTECTING THE SAFETY OF INDIAN PERSONNEL AND WHETHER THEY ARE IN A POSITION TO GUARANTEE SUCH SAFETY." THE ARTICLE CONTINUES: "INDIA CANNOT PLACE ANY CREDENCE EITHER ON THE DACCA STATEMENT THAT THE ATTEMPT WAS TO 'KIDNAP' THE HIGH COMMISSIONER. THE FACT THAT IT TOOK PLACE WITHIN THE PREMISES OF OUR HIGH COMMISSIONER EFFECTIVELY DISCOUNTS SUCH A CLAIM." AND FINALLY: "THE COUPS AND COUNTER-COUPS WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE HAVE ACHIEVED DESTABILIZATION IN BANGLADESH. THE AIM OF THOSE AT THE BACK OF THE DESIGN--AGAINST WHICH THE PRIME MINISTER HAS BEEN CONSTANTLY WARNING US--IS TO PUSH INSTABILITY ACROSS THE BORDERS OF BANGLADESH INTO INDIA. THE INDIAN PEOPLE WILL WANT IT TO BE MADE CLEAR THAT THEY WILL NOT TOLERATE A SITUATION WHERE OUR INDEPENDENCE AND SECURITY ARE THREATENED ONCE AGAIN."

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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3. THE NOVEMBER 27 PRESS CARRIES THE TEXT OF THE STATE-  
MENT OF REGRET OF GOB PRESIDENT SAYEM TO GOI PRESIDENT AHMED.  
THE UNOFFICIAL CONGRESS-R DAILY, "NATIONAL HERALD," RUNS IT  
ON THE FRONT PAGE IN BOLD TYPE.

4. THE "PATRIOT" REPORTS THAT ACCORDING TO INFORMATION AVAILABLE  
IN CALCUTTA, THE GOB HAS IDENTIFIED THE SIX ASSAILANTS AS  
BELONGING TO THE JATIYA SAMAJTANTRIK DAL. WEST BENGAL CHIEF  
SECRETARY B.R. GUPTA REPORTEDLY TOLD THE PRESS THAT IN VIEW  
OF THE NEW CIRCUMSTANCES THERE SHOULD BE "A CONFIRMATION"  
OF THE GOB-GOI BORDER CONFERENCE SCHEDULED FOR NOVEMBER 28  
IN CALCUTTA. "THE TIMES OF INDIA," CITING A MESSAGE RECEIVED  
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BY THE CALCUTTA AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL FROM THEIR COUNTERPART  
IN DACCA, REPORTS THAT HIGH COMMISSIONER SEN WILL RETURN TO  
INDIA NOV. 27 AND SAYS THAT THE INDIAN AIR FORCE MEDICAL  
FLIGHT FOR SEN DID REACH DACCA AT 2334 NOV 26 (SEE DACCA 5860).  
HOWEVER, ACCORDING TO THE BANGLADESH HIGH COMMISSION IN DELHI,  
INDIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER SEN WILL NOT BE RETURNING TO INDIA  
AND THE PRESS STORIES ARE PROBABLY BASED ON EARLIER INFORMATION.  
THE BANGLADESH HIGH COMMISSION INFORMED US THAT IT ALSO HAS  
THIS INFORMATION FROM MEA. "THE TIMES" QUOTES A GOI SPOKES-  
MAN AS SAYING THAT AT PRESENT MEMBERS OF THE STAFF OF THE  
INDIAN HIGH COMMISSION IN DACCA ARE NOT BEING RECALLED. TELE-  
COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN INDIA DN BANGLADESH, INTERRUPTED  
NOV. 26 WERE, ACCORDING TO "THE TIMES" RESTORED THAT EVENING.

5. A "PATRIOT" REPORT FROM A "SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT" IN CAL-  
CUTTA SAYS THAT THE GOB HAS GIVEN THE PRC BERTHING AND  
REFUELING RIGHTS FOR THEIR SHIPS IN CHITTAGONG PORT. WITH  
THESE FACILITIES THE CHINESE, WHO SEEK "TO FISH IN TROUBLED  
WATERS," MAY BRING THEIR SHIPS AND SUBS INTO THE BAY OF  
BENGAL, "POSING A THREAT TO INDIA'S SECURITY." WITH THE  
LOSS OF NAGALAND AS A BASE FOR SUBVERSION, THE CHINESE MAY  
BE USING THE HILLY AREA OF CHITTAGONG "TO CREATE MISCHIEF"  
IN TRIPURA AND MIZORAM.

6. "PATRIOT" AND "THE HINDUSTAN TIMES" CARRY A UNI DISPATCH  
THAT PRO-PAKISTANI ELEMENTS HAVE "STEPPED UP THEIR ACTIVITIES"

AS STUDENTS AND SECTIONS OF THE ARMY CONTINUE TO ENGAGE IN SPORADIC CLASHES WITH THE BANGLADESH ARMY. SUCH CLASHES REPORTEDLY TOOK PLACE IN CHOUDDA GRAM IN COMILLA DISTRICT ON NOVEMBER 18 AND ALSO AT FANGY BAZAR IN SYLHET DISTRICT (NO DATE GIVEN).

7. IN A CALCUTTA DATELINE STORY, "PATRIOT" REPORTS THAT REBELLIOUS SECTIONS OF THE ARMED FORCES PRESENTED A "MEMORANDUM OF DEMANDS" ON NOVEMBER 21 TO THE PRESENT MILITARY REGIME CALLING FOR THE REMOVAL OF TOP ARMED FORCES OFFICIALS INCLUDING LT. COL. SALAUDDIN, CHIEF OF ARMY INTELLIGENCE AND COL. ROUF, CHIEF OF INTER-SERVICES INTELLIGENCE. THESE OFFICERS ARE ACCUSED OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE "MASS KILLINGS" OF MILITARY PERSONNEL. THE MEMORANDUM ALSO DEMANDS INCREASED PAY FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL.  
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**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
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